

Spotlight on History

News from The Lyceum, Friendship Firehouse Museum & Historic Alexandria

Fall 2012

Marking the Civil War Sesquicentennial

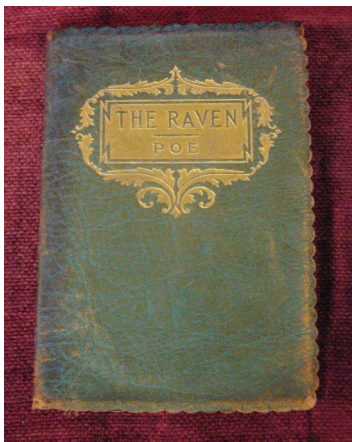
Now on view at The Lyceum, "Occupied City: Life in Civil War Alexandria" examines life in an American community, seized and held by its own Federal government, following Virginia's decision to secede from the Union in May 1861. See how Robert E. Lee's hometown of Alexandria was transformed literally overnight from a prosperous, bustling commercial port into a supply, hospital, and transportation center for the Union Army, and find out why Alexandria became a destination for African Americans seeking freedom. Explore the experiences of Alexandrians and others who lived here during this tumultuous time, through their own words, as well as period photographs and collections items.

*Decorated envelope,
Birds' Eye View of Alexandria, 1863
The Lyceum Collection*



Poe in Alexandria

On Tuesday, October 30 & Wednesday, October 31, actor David Keltz returns to The Lyceum to re-create Edgar Allan Poe's visit to Virginia in 1849, shortly before he died. Keltz performs varying selections each year, but the program always includes a chilling story or two such as "The Black Cat," "The Cask of Amontillado," or "The Tell-Tale Heart," along with well-known poems "The Raven" and "El Dorado." Doors open at 7:15 p.m., and the shows start at 8 p.m. The event is open to all; however, due to the nature of some material, the program is best suited for ages 12 and up. Tickets are \$15 per person, and are available by telephoning The Lyceum at 703.746.4994, or visiting www.alexandriahistory.org and clicking on Shop Historic Alexandria.





Firefighting in Civil War Alexandria

The Friendship Firehouse Museum is offering walking tours about firefighting in Civil War Alexandria on **Saturday, October 27 and November 3.**

When Virginia joined the Confederacy, Union troops occupied Alexandria and the town became a center for transportation, supplies and medicine. Most municipal functions were assumed by the U.S. Army under the authority of the military governor. The “We’ve Been Burned: Alexandria Firefighters During the Civil War” tour will explore firefighting when Alexandria was occupied by Union troops.

How were volunteer fire companies treated by Federal authorities? Were firefighters allowed out after curfew? What happened to the firehouses and equipment? On the walking tour, these questions will be answered as participants visit the sites of four of the five fire houses, and learn what happened if there was a fire in the occupied city.



The tours begin at 1 p.m. at the Friendship Firehouse Museum. Advance reservations for each tour are required, as space is limited. Tickets are \$6 for adults and \$4 for youth ages 10 to 17. (The tours will not interest small children, but may be of interest to youth 10 and older.) To make a reservation visit www.friendshipfirehouse.net, or call 703.746.4994.

Spotlight on: The Friendship Firehouse Collection

This gilded trophy frame hangs in the Friendship Firehouse Museum meeting room. Neptune, God of the Sea, tops the frame with his flowing hair and beard. The sides and bottom are embellished with depictions of fire-fighting equipment, including helmets, nozzles, hoses, hooks, ladders and fire hydrants. Ornate frames were popular during the mid-19th century and they sometimes commemorated national figures, or more grassroots heroes such as community fire-fighters.



Nineteenth-century firehouses were usually elaborately decorated with portraits, trophies, ribbons and other mementos. This frame was rescued in the 1960s from a District of Columbia firehouse that was threatened with demolition. Research has not yet provided any information about the individuals in the photographs the frame exhibits.



William Adair, an authority on the history of picture frames, dates Friendship’s frame circa 1860. He attributes its fabrication to James S. Earle and Son, of Philadelphia. It is made of pine, composition (a resinous casting material), wire, 23k gold leaf and oil paint.

2012 Clio's Kids Summer Camp at The Lyceum



Eleven eager children, ages five to seven, spent three half-days at The Lyceum in July for Clio's Kids: A History Mini Camp. Under the leadership of museum educator Jennifer Lane, this year's theme was "Time Travelers".

On the first day, campers learned about life in Alexandria during World War II. They examined authentic artifacts, danced to Second World War era music, and pretended to purchase groceries in our WWII "store". On the second day, activities included the campers designing and creating monuments with air-dry clay, and taking a tour of Friendship Firehouse Museum presented by site manager Catherine Weinraub. On the final day, campers went on the Inside Old Town walking tour (adapted for the younger audience), snacked at Waterfront Park and visited Alexandria Archaeology. There, The Lyceum campers helped Archaeology campers clean artifacts they had discovered during their dig of a house site at Fort Ward Park earlier that week.



Special thanks to our volunteers: George Washington University intern Jarrett Zeman served as a counselor and prepared materials for our crafts and games, including creating the monuments and memorials lesson plan; Katie Lloyd, returning as junior counselor, read stories to the campers and assisted with activities and field trips.



Photographs of the 2012 Clio's Kids: A History Mini Camp accompany parent and camper resources on the camp page at www.alexandriahistory.org.



Holiday Favorites with the Colonial Handbell Ringers at The Lyceum

Join the Colonial Handbell Ringers on Sunday, December 16, as they present their festive holiday musical show! Get into the spirit of the season as you listen--and sing along--as they present classic musical selections for the holidays. The first performance begins at 2 p.m., with a repeat performance at 4 p.m. The concerts are free, however **reservations are required, as seating is limited.** To make a reservation telephone The Lyceum at 704.746.4994 or visit the online shop.

The Lyceum
Alexandria's History Museum
202 South Washington Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
703.746.4994

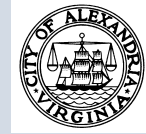
www.alexandriahistory.org

Open Monday—Saturday 10 a.m.—5 p.m.,
Sunday 1—5 p.m.

Friendship Firehouse Museum
107 South Alfred Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
703.746.3891

www.friendshipfirehouse.net

Open Saturday and Sunday, 1 to 4 p.m.



Office of Historic Alexandria
The Lyceum
201 S. Washington Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
